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May 5th, 2008

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CALIFORNIA LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS HONORS OUTSTANDING LATINOS DURING THE LATINO SPIRIT AWARDS IN STATE ASSEMBLY ON 5 DE MAYO

Sacramento – On May 5th, 2008 the California Legislature will honor Latino leaders in a celebration of Latino Heritage in California. Renowned entertainers, a hall of Fame football player, political leaders, trailblazing entrepreneurs and innovative philanthropists will be among the people recognized this year for their contributions to California's history and culture.

The Latino Spirit Awards Ceremony was initiated 7 years ago by the California Latino Legislative Caucus in commemoration of *Cinco de Mayo*. This year marks a special year as the Latino Caucus celebrates its 35th Anniversary as a caucus in the Legislature. The Latino Spirit Awards ceremony is the State's annual celebration recognizing successful Latinos in a variety of fields.

Never has California's Mexican Heritage been more significant than today. Latinos are poised to become the majority population in a state which represents one of the world's largest economies.

“This event allows us to showcase a few of the many outstanding Latinos in the state and reminds the community of the many contributions Latinos have made to our society. These honorees serve as role models for many of our Latino youth, they represent success, and are a point of inspiration to our community,” said Latino Caucus Chair, Assemblymember Joe Coto.

The Latino Spirit Awards Ceremony will be conducted on the Assembly Floor, attended by all Members of the State Assembly. This year's honorees include

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- **Gustavo Arellano** (Achievement in Literature)
- **Jim Plunkett** (Achievement in Athletics & Community Service)
- **Michael Torres** (Achievement in Business & Community Giving)
- **Jaime Escalante** (Achievement in Education)
- **Vilma Martinez** (Achievement in Human Rights)
- **Daniel D. Villanueva** (Achievement in Athletics & Business)
- **Sal Castro** (Achievement in Education & Community Action)
- **Gallegos** (Achievement in Community Giving & Support)
- **Senator Richard Polanco** (*retired*) (Achievement in Leadership & Public Support)
- **Luis Valdez** (Achievement in Literature & Theatre Arts)
- **Jorge Castro** (Achievement in Business & Community Giving)
- **Ramona Delgado (WEAVE)** (Achievement in Community Service)
- **Jennie Hernandez-Gin (WEAVE)** (Achievement in Community Service)
- **Nancy De Los Santos** (Achievement in Cinematic Arts)

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EVENT: LATINO SPIRIT AWARDS – 5 DE MAYO

**TIME: 11:00AM ASSEMBLY FLOOR CEREMONY
12:00PM – 12:30 PRESS AVAIL, 2ND FLOOR ROTUNDA
PRESS AVAIL FOLLOWING CEREMONY ON THE FLOOR**

5:00PM – 8:00PM RECEPTION STATE CAPITOL (NORTH STEPS)

DATE: MONDAY 5 DE MAYO, 2008

LOCATION: ASSEMBLY FLOOR
STATE CAPITOL